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Jean Champommier, Ph.D., Chair, Public Health Commission
Larry Gasco, Ph.D., Chair, Mental Health Commission
c/o County of Los Angeles CEO Office of Health Care Integration
Sent via Electronic Mail

Dear Dr. Champommier and Dr. Gasco,

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the proposed consolidation of the County of Los Angeles health agencies. The Los Angeles Housing + Community Investment Department (HCIDLA) has had productive working relationships with all three agencies for many years. Our comments fit within the framework of two of the 11 core principles adopted by the Public Health Commission on January 27, 2015.

Principle 7: Essential and Legally Mandated Services

The Department of Public Health, including the Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program (CLPPP), is a key partner with the City of Los Angeles' lead-based paint hazard remediation programs.

- For nearly 20 years, CLPPP has supported HCIDLA's efforts to address lead hazards, particularly for children with lead poisoning, as partners in our federally-funded lead hazard remediation grant programs.
- Since 2003, our agencies have worked together to enforce state-mandated lead-safe work practices, with our Systematic Code Enforcement Program and the community-based Healthy Homes Collaborative.
- As HCIDLA has moved into HUD-funded healthy housing work – finding non-toxic approaches to remediate pest infestation, mold, and more -- we look to further expand our collaboration with Public Health on state and local health and safety code enforcement.
- As the administering agency for the Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS (HOPWA) countywide entitlement grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) since 1993, HCIDLA has participated in the County's HIV/AIDS planning efforts, which involve both Public Health and the Department of Health Services (DHS).

Principle 9: Partnership and Collaboration

Each of the County health agencies has created unique partnerships with HCIDLA to address critical needs of City residents. It is our hope that whatever happens with the consolidation proposal, those partnerships will continue to be effective, and can grow to meet emerging needs in the community.

In addition to the abovementioned lead poisoning prevention and healthy homes collaboration with Department of Public Health, HCIDLA has established partnerships with both the Department of Mental Health and Health Services to support the development of permanent supportive housing for homeless residents including:

- Homeless veterans
- Transition-Age Youth (TAY) aging out of foster care
- Chronically homeless persons
- Persons with chronic, severe mental illness
- Persons with HIV/AIDS
- Persons with high utilization of County health services

Specific arrangements with the Department of Mental Health (DMH) include:

- An MOU to provide Mental Health Services Act funds for supportive services in affordable housing financed by the City's Affordable Housing Trust Fund - Permanent Supportive Housing Program; a critical resource for the production of new supportive housing.
- DMH co-locates staff in the Homeless Families Solutions System overseen by the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (LAHSA) which are funded by City and County local dollars as well as entitlement and competitive funds from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).
- DMH funds and/or co-locates staff in some of the City's community-based FamilySource Centers; a partnership we would like to expand.

The Department of Health Services (DHS) partnerships include:

- In 2012, DHS signed an agreement with HCIDLA's Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) to fund services for permanent supportive housing for the highest users of County hospital resources.
- In 2014, DHS allocated about \$14 million to the Housing for Health program, also known as the 'flexible housing pool'; the Hilton Foundation provided another \$4 million of support. The program also provides case management and housing retention services.

Both DMH and DHS have been major participants in the United Way's *Home for Good* Funder's Collaborative and in the development of a Coordinated Entry System to ensure those in the greatest need have priority access to permanent supportive housing. These are critical components of the effort to end homelessness in Los Angeles County.

Since 2014, HCIDLA's HOPWA program has collaborated with Public Health's Division of HIV and STD Programs (DHSP) and DHS's Housing for Health program to improve connections to housing and health services for low-income persons living with HIV/AIDS through co-location of staff at one HIV/AIDS clinic and elimination of duplicate funding and programs, freeing up funds to assist more clients. We are working with DHSP to expand co-location of HOPWA-funded staff into high-use HIV/AIDS clinics to connect more homeless clients, and those at risk of homelessness, to housing options.

Last, but not least, each of the health agencies participates in multi-agency disaster preparedness, response and recovery planning processes and exercises that are specific to their areas of practice. Twenty years ago, after the Northridge earthquake in 1994, DMH staff participated with a variety of City agencies, including our department, on 'reassurance teams' deployed to encourage the public to return home from parks, shelters and other public gathering places once their housing had been determined to be safe. We need to work together to be ready for the catastrophic earthquake that is in our future.

Thank you again for this opportunity to share information about HCIDLA's collaboration with the Los Angeles County health agencies. Whatever decisions are made regarding consolidation, please allow these partnerships to continue and to be enhanced, to serve all of our residents.

Sincerely,



Sally Richman

Director, Knowledge Management and Evaluation